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ABSTRACT

This monograph discusses actual case studies which demonstrate that children learn in many different ways. The methods used are discussed, and wherever possible, the results of the work are cited. The pamphlet also points out that team work among the medical professions, the parents, the child, and the teacher is needed. The areas covered by the discussion are: (1) "Emotional Problems"; (2) "A Remedial Reading Technique"; (3) "Physical Disabilities"; (4) "Neurological Problems"; (5) "What Schools and School Personnel Can Do"; (6) "What Parents Can Do"; (7) "Books, Games, and Gadgets"; (8) "Why Some Children Don't Read"; (9) "The Remedial Reading Teacher"; and (10) "The Joys of Work." (Author)

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REMEDIAL READING: CASE STUDIES

Learners as Teachers: How Teachers Learn from Children with Reading Difficulties

Grace Bentall*

Special Project, Portland, Oregon Public School System

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Introduction

Our American culture almost demands that people read and a person who does not is usually unhappy.

We sometimes forget that many people in this country, as well as in other countries, never learn to read and yet somehow they make a living.

Our schools are geared to college preparation, but not all children are equipped mentally, sociologically, economically, or naturally for this.

Because of an almost frantic desire that all people read, we have expensive remedial reading programs in many cities and some of these programs are frequently under fire.

Reading disability is a symptom, and in teaching a child to read we may do more harm than good unless we also remedy the cause of the difficulty.

To be sure, a person who reads is better accepted in society than one who does not, and so we continue to try to help these children.

This monograph will have as its content real case studies, which should serve to demonstrate that children learn in many different ways. The methods used will be discussed and, wherever possible, the results of the work will be cited.

The pamphlet should also show that team work between the medical professions, the parents, the child, and the teacher is needed.

CHAPTER I

Emotional Problems

Room 13 was the school catch-all for the classroom misfits.

One afternoon, Miss Wade, her blue eyes flashing anger, her spare body trembling with frustration, and her graying hair, usually so tidy, all awry, descended to Room 13. She was forcing an unwilling, pretty, dark-eyed girl into the room. "I can't do a thing with her," said Miss Wade. "Perhaps you can do something."

The girl was very tense, but pride kept back the tears.

I, teacher in Room 13, looked at the girl with pity and invited her in. A battery of tests was ultimately administered. These revealed that Janet was a girl with high intelligence, but she was baffled by reading.

I asked Janet whether she would help me with the other children and whether she would be willing to remain after school for a little while every afternoon and work on the reading. This she was willing and even eager to do.

We soon became friends. Every afternoon, when the hubbub of the day was over, we sat side by side with a Kirk, Hegge, Kirk remedial reading drill book, and Janet laboriously sounded out the dull drills. She was encouraged by her progress and learned quickly. Easy, interesting books were found and read.

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*Miss Bentall has been a teacher in the Portland, Oregon Public Schools for 23 years; for seven years she was supervisor of remedial reading. She has been a member of ASCD and Oregon ASCD for many years. She wishes to dedicate this monograph to "the boys and girls who helped to teach me" and to Mr. Don James "who taught and encouraged me."

We often walked part of the way home together, and as faith and confidence were established, the girl told of her father's disgrace. He had embezzled funds and was now serving a term in prison.

This sixth grade girl was bright and sensitive. The humiliation caused by the father's defalcation had been a crushing blow and had upset a stable life. The mother had moved into a small, drab apartment and she, too, found the situation difficult to face, so was of little help to her daughter. A son was away at college.

I visited the mother and found her quite hostile, which I recognized as defense. The mother was upset because Janet had been so summarily placed in a special class as an incorrigible girl. I could sympathize with both Janet and her mother.

I was happy to be able to assure Janet's mother that Janet was intelligent, but was upset and was having a difficult time adjusting to the home situation and that this affected her schoolwork. I could also assure the mother that Janet was beginning to read.

In a few months, Janet was reading independently, and much of her aggression had dispersed. The principal and teachers conferred and decided that Janet was ready to go into the eighth grade. Here, the teacher was able to help her, and Janet had no difficulty in meeting the challenge of the harder work.

Janet graduated from high school, became an Episcopal Sister, and went to England to work with needy children.

I did not hear from her for a long time. Eventually I received a letter. Janet said she was working with a little girl who had been abandoned. She wanted to teach her as she remembered I had taught her so long ago. She asked for some advice and some books. Then she said she would never forget me, who was the only adult to take pity on her when she was a child and needed it so much. Such a statement is one of the treasured rewards of teaching. The latest news of Janet is that she is now attending classes in New York City to prepare herself as a social worker.

One never knows about life. Janet's life might have been happier if the father's mistake had not been made. She was able to make a contribution in relieving other unhappy children.

We often find reading disability and emotional maladjustment intertwined. In Janet's case, it appeared that the emotional problem had brought about the reading difficulty. When she accepted her father's error and forgave him, she began to read.

Sometimes children punish parents or gain attention, which they feel they need by refusing to read.

Johnny comes to first grade, but reading is a mystery to him. He is too young and immature. The other children race ahead, but the only word Johnny recognizes is "mother" and that only on a flash card, with a smudge on it. In a book "mother" never looks the same. The smudge is missing. The teacher is concerned and talks with Johnny's mother who becomes worried. The situation snowballs and soon many others become concerned, including Johnny. He knows he is disappointing his mom and dad. Little sister tries to help, but this adds insult to injury.

Johnny begins to have nightmares in which he is surrounded by hostile forces. Here is a reading "case" in the making, and much reassurance is needed by all concerned. First should come a thorough diagnosis, including physical, neurological, mental, and other examinations. A psychiatric social worker's help may be used before reading is again attempted.

I worked with Mike, a sullen, tall, thin, eighth grade boy, who was unable to master any more than the rudiments of reading. He worked hard, and gained considerably in reading as well as his other subjects. His eighth grade teacher, a man, was most cooperative.

Mike gradually revealed his terrible home-life. One day he came, especially upset. The man staying with his mother put him out of the house. Mike said, "I got a gun and I was going to shoot him."

Mike went to high school, but one day, when I was involved with a group of disturbed children, I heard a knock at the door. I answered it, and found Mike standing there.

'Miss Bentall," he said, "you will be so ashamed of me. I did something wrong and I have been in Juvenile Home. I'm on probation."

"I'm sorry, Mike," I replied, "but we all make mistakes, and if we learn our lesson, perhaps it is all for the good."

The children in the room needed me, and Mike needed to talk. I was so sorry to have to break off the conversation to return to my room. I never heard from Mike again.

CHAPTER II

A Remedial Reading Technique

Just when I needed it, Dr. Roy Street, psychologist in Grand Rapids, Michigan, became interested in the problem of reading disability and organized a summer reading clinic. He invited me to be on his staff. Librarians also helped.

I learned much that summer. I learned a technique I have found very useful and with which I have subsequently had much success. I have tried to teach other teachers to use this method; however, not every child responds to this way of teaching, but this is soon apparent and I quickly make a shift. Dr. Samuel Kirk says that if a child does not learn to read, it is because the method is not suited to the child. This puts a burden on teachers.

Dr. E. W. Dolch, who did so much for poor readers, wrote an article published in the March, 1953, issue of Elementary English. In it he said that children who are having difficulty with reading are confused in letters, sounds, words and the way they are formed and used. He suggested that teachers find the area of confidence and begin at this point to try to clarify things. He made three points: (a) Restore the child's security. (b) Discover the child's "area of confidence" in reading. (c) Advance from the area of confidence by a continual series of "success steps."

Dr. Dolch also stressed that teachers must be gentle, sympathetic, consistent and thorough. Stay on one step long enough before trying to go on to the next.

I have not had complete success in my work and often, I am sure, I learn more than the children. I continue to be amazed that the children do as well as they do.

One outstanding failure was David, a handsome, blond, affable seventh grade boy. No method seemed to work with him and no one could understand why David could not learn. The school cannot save everyone and one psychologist comforted me by telling me that if I could bring some little happiness to some child, I was doing my bit, even though I did not teach the child to read.

Alvin's father had deserted the family and Alvin frequently found life too much for him. He would run away, to be gone several days at a time. The teacher asked Alvin to tell her when he felt like running away, but he seldom did, since his behavior was impulsive.

Another youngster stole candy and treated everyone, including me. How much he needed friends! Then the police came and I had a piece of candy with a tell-tale wrapper and was the incriminating agent. How sad I was! This child was glad to be caught. He was taken to Juvenile Home where he delighted in being clean and sleeping between clean white sheets.

There are still many things we do not know about how children learn to read, in spite of all of the research. The children who have so much trouble are the source of much of our knowledge. The marvel is that so many do master this skill.

I recognized these problems and I had discovered that children reading below fourth grade level are not independent readers because they have no functional method of word attack. How to remedy this was a problem.

I had tried the Kirk, Hegge, Kirk phonic method, but it was so boring, especially for bright children. Dr. Street's clinic gave me just the experience I needed.

The technique is only a beginning and many other things are needed. These will be discussed as we proceed.

This method is based upon certain assumptions: (a) that the child can learn, (b) that the child has been exposed to reading, (c) that the child has some knowledge, (d) that the child has feelings, and (e) that the child is discouraged.

Small groups, usually no larger than six, are formed. These children, as a rule, are subdued and fearful. They and and I sit in a circle and chat about things of their interest. Perhaps someone has lost a tooth. One may have new shoes. All are encouraged to speak.

I then tell them my name, and ask them, "If you wanted to telephone me this evening, how would you do it?" Someone suggests the telephone book. They decide in which part of the book they would look for the name Bentall. They play around in this way with each other's last names. They talk of other books arranged in alphabetical order and begin to see why the order of letters is important.

I then give each youngster a little notebook, opening at the side as does a book. He is told this will be called his dictionary because he will put words in it. He writes his name on the book cover so that he knows it is his own.

Do the children know the alphabet? I find they are not sure of it unless they know the little song they have learned in which the alphabet is sung.

A commercial alphabet is fastened on the wall and used to facilitate the alphabetizing of the booklets. The letters may be written in script, manuscript, or printed. They are the children's work.

I am able to observe whether the child has difficulty forming letters, whether he reverses them or whether he has trouble with the order. This operation usually occupies the first half hour session, but at the end, each child has completed an assignment successfully, and often says "thank you" as he leaves.

The second day, the children are more relaxed. They are encouraged to talk. They usually talk of personal things such as a mother in the hospital. Perhaps a father has just left for another city. Possibly breakfast was an unpleasant meal.

I give each child a half sheet of lined paper and his "dictionary" and tell him to write down what he said. "Writing is just talk written down." Usually the children protest they cannot do this, but I assure them that they can, with my help. All each child needs to do when he needs a word is to open his "dictionary" to the right page and possibly write the first letter. Then he must raise his hand and teacher will come to the rescue.

Perhaps Johnny needs the word "fishing." He has written the "f" and then stopped. I see he has difficulty with the vowel sounds. I say, "Can you spell it?" If he can, I pronounce "fishing," emphasizing the short "i" sound. Does Johnny hear that the sound he makes next in "fishing" is the same as in "it"? He usually says he does and writes it.

Does he know what letters to use when I say "sh"? I will know if he does and will write it; if not, I tell him and then he writes it. Possibly he knows "ing." If so, he writes it; if not, I tell him.

Now Johnny has the word he needed and traces it with his pencil, pronouncing each sound as he does this. In the meantime, I am busy with another child. When Johnny thinks he knows the word, he writes it on the board and I can see it from wherever I am. If it is right, as it usually is, I nod. Johnny erases the word, goes to his seat, closes his "dictionary" and writes the word in his "story," underlining it.

Sometimes children write a sentence, but seem not to realize they cannot spell the words. Debra wrote, "Lite nit I diaey eggs." She needed to learn to spell "last," "night," and "dyed."

The third day, each child receives a paper with his "story" typed on it and the words learned, listed underneath, like this:

Saturday we are going to color our Easter eggs.

Saturday
Color
Easter

Each child reads his story in an audience situation. It is interesting because no other child knows what he has written.

I ask Celia which words she learned and Celia pronounces and spells them. She may look at the words as she spells them for I want to know if she recognizes the letters as she spells them. "How many syllables in 'Saturday'?" I ask. Celia beats them out on the desk and says, "Three." "How many vowels are there?" I query, and Celia is able to answer this question.

When there is a word like "last," I ask Debra to spell it, and then immediately ask her to spell "fast." The other children participate by asking her to spell other rhyming words. Here we have lessons in listening, auditory discrimination, rhyming, and spelling and there is nothing but success.

This system, with little variation but with considerable increase in speed, continues through Thursday.

You may wonder about books. Many attractive, easy ones, have been conspicuously displayed, but no attention has been called to them.

Friday is "check" day. I tell the children I am not going to pay them by check, but I am going to see if they remember the words they have been learning. It is the first time the children have had an opportunity to look closely at the books. I can check two or three people at once. They simply pronounce the words they have put in their "dictionaries." I date each page. At the end of the notebook is a page headed "Words." Johnny or Susie count the words in their books and I write the date, the number of words, with "OK," if all of the words have been named correctly.

After several weeks, the final page may look like this:

9/21/67	6	OK
10/13/67	22	OK
10/20/67	29	OK
10/27/67	36	OK
11/03/67	50	OK
11/17/67	55	OK
11/31/67	59	OK
12/15/67	67	OK

It might be of interest to see the words asked by the child whose summary was cited:

brought	path	other	trouble
band	flowers	pair	their
brother	glasses	piano	three
called	glad	sister	teacher
Clark	games	skirt	Thomas
college	grade	sock	thumb
couldn't	group	some	think
cousin	Halloween	school	vowels
clean	hurts	story	what
Christmas	knee	sweet	works
Dean	Mrs.	substitute	write
dinner	mother	snapper	wants
father	new	salmon	winter
fifteen	one	summer	yesterday
fillet	organ	silver	
fish	oysters		

The first week, I don't know whether the recall is sheer memory or not, but later, as more words are added, I observe how the child attacks the words.

When a youngster has as many as seventy-five words in his "dictionary," he will be able to read nearly anything. This is because he will have nearly covered phonic and structional analysis of words.

The little fourth grade girl, whose record of words is cited, reached her grade placement of reading by the middle of the year. While I have been checking the children's words, those children not involved have been examining the books. Most have found something they like and can read. These children must be checked too, so those who have been checked now examine books.

By now, the routine of story writing, word play, and audience reading does not occupy the full half hour period and children have time to read books of their choice. There is no embarrassment as all are at about the same level.

It is surprising how quiet the room becomes when children are reading books they can enjoy.

I use the Dolch Basic Work list and made games to help children learn some of the troublesome words. These will be discussed later. This list was divided into levels by Dr. Edith Sullivan at the University of Wisconsin. (See page 6)

I use all the kinaesthetic clues I can possibly thing of when helping the children. Johnny wants the word "found." He has written the "f", then I playfully pinch him and say "ou." He seldom forgets this. I show the children they bite their tongues when they write "th." I blow on their finger when they ask for the "wh" word. The children must roll their tongues across the roof of their mouths for the "l" sound.

Many more phases of diagnosis and teaching must be discussed in subsequent chapters.

DOLCH BASIC WORD LIST

PRE-PRIMER	PRIMER	FIRST GRADE	SECOND GRADE	THIRD GRADE
a	all	after	always	about
and	am	again	around	better
away	are	an	because	bring
big	at	any	been	carry
blue	ate	as	before	clean
can	be	ask	best	cut
come	black	by	both	done
down	brown	could	buy	draw
find	but	every	call	drink
for	come	fly	cold	eight
funny	did	from	does	fall
go	do	give	don't	far
help	eat	going	fast	full
here	f	had	first	got
I	g	has	five	grow
in	good	her	found	hold
is	have	him	gave	hot
it	he	his	goes	hurt
jump	into	how	green	if
little	like	just	its	keep
look	must	know	made	kind
make	new	let	many	laugh
me	no	live	off	light
my	now	may	or	long
not	on	of	pull	much
one	our	old	read	myself
play	out	once	right	never
red	please	open	sing	only
run	pretty	over	sit	own
said	ran	put	sleep	pick
see	ride	round	tell	seven
the	saw	some	their	shall
three	say	stop	these	show
to	she	take	those	six
two	so	thank	upon	small
up	soon	them	us	start
we	that	then	use	ten
where	there	think	very	today
yellow	they	walk	wash	together
you	this	were	which	try
	too	when	why	warm
	under		wish	
	want		work	
	was		would	
	well		write	
	went		your	
	what			
	white			
	who			
	will			
	with			
	yes			

CHAPTER III

Physical Disabilities

"I'm tired," is a phrase I so often hear in the morning. Why should John, Joe and Nick always start the day with these words? Is it because they are bored? Is it because they do not get enough sleep? I listen.

"Did you see that T.V. show? I didn't get to bed until midnight." Such conversations often occur.

"I didn't eat breakfast, this morning. I got up too late." It is possible this may throw some light on the tiredness.

Jimmy was tall, thin, very pale and listless. He constantly yawned. Reading seemed an impossibility. I referred him to the University Medical School Diagnostic Clinic. The doctors discovered a serious heart ailment and Jimmy was not getting enough oxygen to his brain. The doctors recommended an operation which the mother could not face.

I had read the Cumulative Record Card and read that the home was uncooperative. Letters written there had never been answered.

I decided to visit the home and here I found misery. The mother spent most of her time on the bed. She was dying from a progressive incurable disease. She could walk only a few steps using crutches. Her hearing was nearly gone and her sight was affected. Only Jimmy and his mother were in the home.

Jimmy had so many counts against him! I felt not only pity but also helplessness in remedying this situation. Remedial reading was discontinued.

Tom was listless and always tired. He tried hard, but with such small reward! He went to the doctor who diagnosed his trouble as pernicious anaemia.

When I was appointed the remedial reading consultant for the city of Portland, I was called by many discouraged teachers who were unable to teach certain youngsters to read. Many of these children appeared to have physical ailments.

I went, by appointment, to a meeting of the doctors of the University of Oregon Medical School. I carried a sheaf of case studies, all of which had a history which would be interesting to the medical profession. On that day a great longitudinal research study was initiated and is still continuing.

Research concerning human beings is the most difficult research. Human beings do not lend themselves to statistical analysis. After a number of years of study of cases of reading disabilities, nothing conclusive has been published.

Some children are listless, and entirely lacking in aspiration; some are hyper-active and cannot concentrate long enough to learn. It is seldom possible for the teacher alone to diagnose the problem. The medical profession is needed.

Children who are hard of hearing often have reading problems. Many of these children are not recognized as having difficulty with hearing. Their deficiency shows up as a reading problem. Often these children lack a knowledge of the meaning of words. They may be able to read fluently, orally, but when questioned as to meaning, the lack of knowledge is discovered. Sometimes such children are quiet and self-effacing and the teacher may easily overlook the fact that the child is hard of hearing. The loss may be slight, but still enough to cause significant gaps in learning.

Many children referred to clinics or remedial reading classes are plagued by allergies and hay fever. Asthma is another symptom found in reading disability classes. It is almost impossible to know whether the physical symptom is the cause of the reading difficulty or whether it is a result of the anxiety caused by the reading failures.

Willard Olson and Bryon O. Hughes carried on a longitudinal study of the phases of the growth patterns of a number of children in the University of Michigan Child Development Laboratory. They measured mental age, carpel age, dental age, inches in height, pounds in weight, and of strength in grip age. These measurements, all recorded as ages, along with chronological and reading age were graphed. After a number of years, patterns began to emerge. Some were quite symmetrical with growth in each area following a consistent pattern. Some, however, showed the growth pattern to be

irregular; dental age might lag behind the others. Reading age, too, might lag. Eventually, all ages seemed to reach a point in common. As the doctors said, growth does not occur without nurture.

I have paid more attention to this since reading the study and now notice that often children from the fourth or fifth grades in my remedial reading classes still have their first teeth and begin to lose them at this time.

Jerry was a big boy for his age and poorly coordinated. He had average intelligence, was in the third grade, but could not read a word; in fact, he did not recognize the letters of the alphabet and had no sight vocabulary. Whenever I asked him a question, before thinking he replied, "I don't know."

I tried having him in a group using my familiar technique, but this was not effective because of his difficulty in writing, due to his poor coordination. He became more disturbed as he saw others succeed, while he could not.

I rearranged my program so that Jerry and I could work together for fifteen minutes a day. I used games to help him learn to recognize the letters. I made games to help him learn sight words. He began to learn as he gained confidence along with success. His "I don't know" phrase was used less frequently, but it was difficult to erradicate completely. He read a number of little, very easy books and was eager to try harder ones.

At the end of the year he was given a standardized reading examination and scored grade 3.8 in word recognition and grade 2.5 in comprehension. Word recognition must come before there can be much word analysis or much comprehension.

In one class a child who was listless went to the doctor and it was found he needed a kidney operation. Another had a hernia which needed attention. Another one had an operation for appendicitis. Yes, we need the help of the medical profession.

The Snellen test is used widely in schools for testing vision. This is a screening test and children with far sight usually do well on it. Far sight is not used in reading books. Sometimes a child's eyes cannot focus comfortably on the printed word. The discomfort and possible headache may cause him to dislike reading. An ophthalmologist, by dilating the pupils, is able to examine the eyes much more carefully and, if he is told the patient is having trouble with reading, he may prescribe lens for the close work. Only a professional examination can determine this. Young children are usually far-sighted. Reading requires close attention to details.

Toothaches, stomach-aches, headaches, earaches and all other aches are very personal and can make one feel miserable. Such things take the mind from work in hand.

Too many children in my classes have not enough of the proper food, nor enough sleep. In addition they have not had enough constructive experiences to help develop vocabulary and the proper kind of independence.

Sometimes I wonder why children are brought into this over-populated world just to suffer neglect.

CHAPTER IV

Neurological Problems

I urge that every child who is behind in his school work have a thorough physical examination, including ophthalmological, psychological, and neurological tests.

One summer a tall thin blond boy was referred to the summer reading clinic. He had been to the Mayo Clinic and the doctors had discovered that Tom had no peripheral vision. I found that he was ambidextrous and referred him to the University of Oregon Medical School to see if the doctors could advise training of one side, and if so, which. After a careful examination, Dr. Littlewhite advised training of the right side and Tom was to play catch, bat a ball, use his eating utensils; in fact, do everything with his right hand.

How could the reading clinic help such a handicapped boy learn to read? I tried typing the words vertically, but books are not written that way. Then I tried to see if he could hold the book so that the words were in vertical position. Perhaps this boy would never learn to read.

Another summer, two children, a boy and girl, each

about twelve years old, entered the clinic. They perceived symbols completely reversed. I had Bob hold an easy book before the mirror and he read it for a little while each day. At the same time, he was going through a writing technique. After about three days of this, while reading in the mirror, he suddenly said, "It's all backwards!" Mirror reading was then stopped and Bob soon learned to read well and to enjoy it. His family was overjoyed and the clinic's reputation soared.

The girl had the same symptoms and scored on intelligence tests about the same as did the boy. The same treatment was tried, but since no change seemed to occur, I requested the father to take Mary to an ophthalmologist. This he did and the doctor called me to tell me that Mary could never have learned to read without the aid of lens.

One day, one of the professors of the college brought his class in to observe the clinic. The children had been working on a radio play in which they read the parts and made the sound effects, all behind screens. They performed the play perfectly, and at the very end, one of the big boys stood up and looked over the screen at the row of teachers. He fairly screamed at them, "I hate all teachers. I hate teachers." It was a good demonstration of how one disturbed boy poured out his feelings. He did learn to read, however.

Pretty fifth-grade Meg was another strange case. A neurological examination diagnosed her trouble as an inability to associate sound and symbol. A phonic method could not help her. Meg was very bright and managed to read inaccurately by learning to recognize words by sight and then skipping from one of these words to another. It is surprising to see how well she did in spite of the difficulty.

Bill and Phil, identical twin boys, came to a college summer reading clinic. Bill was sent to one group and Phil to another, but no progress was noted. They worked together and still no success resulted. A psychologist examined them and said they were so involved in each other that neither was independent. They could not learn to read until they were independent. Dr. Jones recommended they be placed in different foster homes for a year or two. This the parents could not consider. The clinic could not solve this problem.

There are so many differences in children that I have never had the temerity to guarantee that I can teach any child to read.

These children, however, do serve a purpose not only in showing how little we know and keeping us humble, but sometimes teaching us how to teach them.

It seems obvious that frustration will accompany most of these neurological problems, for child, teacher, parents and everyone concerned. Fortunately the medical profession is able to prescribe medication for some hyper-active children.

If one does the very best he can, he should worry no further. One should not feel guilt. Reading is not a life or death matter and all children cannot learn to read. They should be helped to excel in other ways.

CHAPTER V

What Schools and School Personnel Can Do

The American educational system presently provides generously for the education of our youth, through taxes paid by parents and others. American children are fortunate in having so much spent upon them

School personnel are extremely important. Well-trained classroom teachers, school social workers, nurses, teacher aids and special teachers in art, music, shop, speech and reading, and custodians need to be carefully chosen, and can often aid in instructing children. The secretary is a very important person in many ways. The right kind of principal is a focal point.

All of these people must learn to work as a team, which is sometimes not easy, for all are human.

Sometimes classroom teachers feel threatened by some of the other members of the team, but this is unnecessary. All teachers need to work for the good of the child and unless all cooperate closely, little can be accomplished.

The remedial reading teacher needs to know what is

transpiring in the classroom if she or he is to work effectively. The remedial reading teacher can often find easier subject matter material so that children can still participate in classroom activities with more success.

Robert was a defeated eighth grade boy. He could scarcely read and was so discouraged that he had become a serious behavior problem. Some early success became an imperative.

The classroom teacher assigned a social studies report which was a major project. A minimum number of pages was designated. The subject of forestry as an industry of the northwest was Robert's assignment.

He came into the remedial reading class obviously distressed. It would require much of his cramped writing to cover one page, much less several. He could not spell. I suggested that he use pictures to fill up some of the space. We brought magazines to cut up. He actually became interested in the project and handed in quite a respectable report. A few days later, he brought the booklet back to show me his "A." The contrast between his beginning defeatist attitude and his triumphant ending demonstrates the effect of success.

As a remedial reading teacher, I teach many other things. When any child is troubled, he usually cannot concentrate on reading. Sometimes he cannot understand mathematics and is worried about it, so we start to work there. This is one reason why remedial reading teachers need to keep up on all subjects.

I work as closely as possible with classroom teachers, school social workers, nurse and principal, as well as parents. There is much difficulty in finding opportunities for face-to-face meetings. Sometimes this is possible by arranging luncheon meetings, but much of the conferencing is done by means of notes or telephone calls.

School administrators, recognizing the importance of such conferences, might help by scheduling time for this most important activity.

I went to one large school and the teachers' rest room was assigned as my place of operation. It was a small, unpleasant room. I objected both for the sake of the children and the teachers. I asked the principal if he could find another place. He told me to try. The nurse had a very nice room which she used a part of two days a week. She kindly offered to let me use this room and agreed to use the teachers' rest room for her office. Ever since, this nice room has been the remedial reading room, although it still bears the sign "Nurse" above the door.

Here, the school officials could well serve. When planning buildings, one room should be designated as the remedial reading room. It need not be, and should not be, as large as a classroom, but should be pleasant and centrally situated. I know of a remedial reading class held in a basement storeroom. This should never be permitted.

Remedial reading teachers do not require much by way of supplies. Accelerators and other such machines may serve as motivational devices, but they are not necessary. Even books can be obtained from the public or state libraries. Reading tests could be eliminated and an informal reading test used.

This informal test may be teacher made, using a standard set of reading books. A few pages from the beginning, middle and end are randomly selected at each grade level and pasted on cards, or bound in some way. The teacher should also prepare some questions with which to test the comprehension. This would save much money, but not deprive the child.

Standardized tests are very good, if interpreted correctly. Some children freeze when they see a test and do not do as well as they might. Some children work very hard to pass a test and attain a frustration level. This is not the point at which instruction should commence.

Standardized intelligence tests seem to be required, but these should be given individually, by qualified personnel, under optimum conditions. Even then, the results should be taken with a few grains of salt. The makers of these tests agree that there is a range of error. Teachers' judgements have long been recognized as being nearly on a par with the tests. Diagnostic teaching may

be applied to help the remedial reading teacher reach a decision.

Surely, then, every child who is having difficulty with reading should be given a chance to try to improve.

CHAPTER VI

What Parents Can Do

Parents produce children, but their responsibility does not end there. If a child is to develop to his potential he needs nurture.

First of all, the child must be wanted and warmly welcomed into this world.

His physical well-being is important. He needs proper food, necessary rest, a good home and so many other necessities that only parents can supply. Perhaps I should define a "good home." I mean a happy home where there is a minimum of contention. The furniture and general environment may seem to be less than might be desired, but there is a certain something which makes a home a home, no matter how humble it may be.

Children early begin to talk, and at this time it is important to help them develop a good vocabulary. They should be taught that the spout from which the water rushes is a faucet, not a thing-a-ma-jig. Precision in the use of words may be fostered at a very early age. An interest in words may be encouraged. Learning to speak in clear, complete sentences is aided in the home, both by example, and actual instruction. Parents help a child to develop an interest in words. My parents must have done this. I well remember puzzling over a word I had encountered in a story. The word was "equilibrium." I remember (I was only about six years old) climbing up on a chair to reach the dictionary. I perched up there and searched for this interesting word, and found that I was actually demonstrating the meaning of the word. I never forgot it. Perhaps my parents might have put the dictionary in a more accessible place, but then I might not have remembered the word so well.

One junior high school boy I had in class had not had this experience. He came to me one day and asked, "Will you teach me to pray?"

This was a bit surprising and I asked him to tell me more. "Well," he said, "On Easter I am going to be compromised and I must learn these prayers."

Of course, I helped him and then on Easter Sunday, I went to the service and saw him properly "compromised."

One way of helping to build a rich vocabulary is by providing opportunities for experiences. Parents who do this take their children on little excursions, ride with them on elevators, escalators, buses and perhaps trains, boats, and airplanes. At least, they take them to the stations. That doesn't cost anything. Perhaps they allow them to put their own fare in the box on the bus. They walk with the children and patiently try to answer their never-ending questions.

Furthermore, through all this, parents should help children develop self-discipline and independence. This is not an easy task, for discipline first is applied from without. Timmy reaches out to touch the glowing electric heater. "No!" screams his mother, and she may slap his little hand. Too many 'no's" develop a deafness to the word.

This year in my remedial reading class I had a brother of a boy I had had previously. This boy demonstrated the same symptoms the older boy did. These boys did not seem to "hear" anything they were told. They were very pleasant and appeared to pay attention, but little "registered." I had a conference with the mother, and she appeared concerned and was also very pleasant. I could not understand this until a class-room teacher told me she had gone to call at the home and as she approached it, heard the mother fairly screaming at the boys. They had learned to turn a deaf ear and this carried over to the school environment.

I do not remember ever having been punished corporally by my parents. I usually recognized their displeasure of my unsocial behavior by their looks, and I did want to please them. They always expressed approbation when I did something which merited it.

Very early in my life I was put on a train and sent to visit my grandparents. The conductor was asked to keep an eye on me and there was someone to meet me at the end of the journey. In this manner, I developed independence, but always under protection.

Some children in my remedial reading classes have never been allowed to go anywhere alone. These are not confident, happy children. Several mothers have said they would not think of allowing their children to go into restrooms in public places alone. This can only foster fear, and nearly always such behavior is unnecessary. How much better it would be to warn children of possible danger so that they can protect themselves.

This is all easy to say; but I have met many parents who love their children almost too dearly and are reluctant to give them any independence. One over-conscientious father helped his little boy with his reading every evening. The boy was a bright little one and easily learned his "reading" lesson so that the next day he confidently "read" his lesson orally and was at the head of the class. The father was required to leave on a business trip, and the mother was too busy to go through the reading ritual. Next day, Sonny could not read. Then the teacher discovered that he had no reading ability whatsoever. It was nearing the end of the school year, and the father was frantic. Sonny had been memorizing the lessons, but not reading them. He entered the summer reading clinic and in six weeks learned to really read. Sometimes well-meaning parents do "too much."

I used to go to my father when I had little decisions to make. We would talk things over pro and con, but after the conversation, he would say, "You must make up your own mind, but you know what Mom and Dad would like you to do." I was just beginning to learn to make decisions. Example and guidance were wisely provided.

I often tell remedial reading teachers that they must become well-acquainted with the children with whom they work. They become involved with them, but once this empathy is well-established, a gradual pushing away must take place. The child must not become too dependent, but must be helped, with support, to stand on his own feet.

Let me again illustrate by my own upbringing. We were not a wealthy family, as far as money is concerned, and as soon as we could, we children earned a little money, some of which we used to pay board. Does this seem harsh? We didn't feel it to be, but were glad to help all we could. I was the eldest of five and I well remember my parents saying, "We will see you through high school, but beyond that, you will be on your own. As long as we are here, you will always have a home to come back to."

A number of books have been written about how to help children at home and one of these is the little book, "How to Help Your Child in School," by Mary and Lawrence K. Frank. This is a practical and helpful book.

I often advise parents to leave the cereal boxes on the breakfast table. The children are attracted by the bright colors and clever illustrations and they may begin to wonder about the words as they munch the cereal. They may ask what the words are and that is the time to tell them.

Alphabet blocks are still good playthings for little children. At least, letter forms become familiar.

A child should be given picture books and alphabet books so that they may learn to handle and like them. Adults, or even older children can read these and other books to children.

These are only a few aspects of the home's role in preparing children for successful experiences in learning to read.

When parents and other members of the family read, they set an example for the child. He sees them enjoying this activity and becomes curious. Soon he wants to try too.

A happy home is also very important.

Children should be enjoyed, but they are not pets or playthings, but little human beings, with varying potential. What a wonderful privilege it is to help little dependent humans develop into happy, healthy, successful children who are enjoyed by most adults.

There is nothing as interesting and loveable as a child, and no greater responsibility than contributing to his well-being.

CHAPTER VII

Books, Games and Gadgets

Many, many books are on the market now, and it seems there should be a book to please every child.

Some children like structured lessons such as the S.R.A. materials, Gates-Peardon Workbooks, or Sullivan programmed booklets. These teach children many skills.

We want to perruade children to enjoy books and we usually begin with very easy, interesting books such as the Cowboy Sam, Butternut Bill, Bucky Button and many other such series. The Dr. Suess books are excellent for practice with rhyming words and repetition of sight-words. Most children like to read these aloud.

Dr. Dolch made a real contribution with his series of easy to read books, including Dog Stories, Famous Stories, Horse Stories and a number of others.

Mr. Bulla, too, is a favorite author and Marty was so enamoured over these books that he wrote a letter of appreciation to Mr. Bulla, and received a nice reply.

The Adventure Series, a rather drab appearing set of books telling of the lives of famous people, are very well written for reluctant readers and once a child begins these books, I feel I can relax a bit.

I have always been interested in watching a child's progress. On the bulletin board I put little colored booklets, one for each group. On each page is the name of a child in the group and on his page we keep track of his reading.

This is a copy of Ronnie's page:

The Boxcar Children. p.10
Jim Forest and Ranger Don. Finished
Jim Forest and the Bandits. Finished
Pilot Jack Knight. p.4 p.8
Jerry Goes Fishing. Finished
Little Black, a Pony. Finished
White Sails to China. Finished
John Billington. Finished
Jim Thorpe. Finished
Riding the Pony Express. Finished
Squanto and the White Men. Finished
Star of Wildhorse Canyon. Finished
Three-Dollar Mule. Finished
Dan Morgan. Finished
Boxcar Children. p.57

Ronnie came up to grade in his reading. Note that he started with the Boxcar Children, but dropped it quickly in favor of a very simple, but interesting book from the Jim Forest Series. He then tried one of the Adventure Series, Pilot Jack Knight, but found it too difficult so he regressed to the very easy Jerry Goes Fishing. From that he gradually advanced with harder books until he again tried Boxcar Children. I think he finished this, but did not record it.

Ronnie had good sense. He knew when a book was too hard. When he was able to read the book, he finished it. He learned to enjoy reading.

A list of books must be only partial. New titles appear every month. Sometimes a book not on any approved list is just the book for a certain child.

Three sets of books I have found to be especially useful are Kissen's Straw Ox, The Bag of Fire and The Crowded House. These are books written at third, fourth and fifth grade reading levels. The stories are folk tales. These are presented as radio plays, with announcer, narrator and various parts. There are musical interludes and sound effects.

The children enjoy reading and presenting these plays. They read with more understanding. As they present these plays (behind screens) to their classmates, their prestige and the prestige of the remedial program soars. The esprit de corps among the poor readers becomes strong. The children take all of the responsibility for setting up the situation, carrying the screens, sound effects and books. What excitement there is!

The preparation for this play requires meaningful repetition. Often we make a tape recording so that the children can hear where they need to improve. The plays usually provide high motivation.

Perhaps the most important thirgs to remember about books is that each child should have a book he can read and in which he is interested. One mother of a boy in the reading clinic brought me a list of books available to the boy in the home. She was so disgusted because he would not read them. He would not because he could not.

Games provide a fine setting for learning, and many

commercial games are on the market. Here again, Dr. Dolch made some excellent contributions.

Go Fish, a card game used for teaching single consonants and the sounds they represent as well as consonant blends is good, if properly used. It is sometimes difficult to make a pure consonant sound and there is a tendency to add a suggestion of a vowel sound.

Not long ago, when supervising teachers in a reading clinic, I found a teacher and boy about to begin a game of Go Fish with the single consonants. I felt sure this boy knew these well, and he did, but he liked the game. Games are not for pleasure alone, but also to satisfy the learning motive. I introduced the game of syllables, for which this particular boy was ready.

Match is another game used to help in visual and auditory discrimination between words and to teach the most common nouns. It requires attention to details.

The Popper Words, in two sets are for the purpose of teaching instant recognition of the basic vocabulary. The teacher who is ingenious may use these in many different ways.

The game of Vowel Dominoes helps children distinguish between the very difficult short vowel sounds. This game requires careful teaching and much verbalization. It may be used after the child has his basic vocabulary, and the consonants and consonant blends.

Following this, is the game of phrases. I usually place, or have the children place the cards containing the phrases all around the room. I collect a handful of good phrases, such as "the big black dog" or "the old man." Each child draws a beginning phrase and then tries to find two more phrases to complete a sentence. This requires much study of the many phrases, and most children like this type of drill. They bring up a completed sentence and read it orally.

All of these skills must be put into practice in books for, isolated, they are meaningless.

Later, there is a game called Sight Syllable Solitaire. Actually, there are three games; one with ending syllables paired, another with beginning syllables paired, and the third containing groups of four family words of one syllable, two syllables, three syllables and four syllables. An example of this could be: walk, saunter, meander, perambulate. This game is excellent for vocabulary development. One class of boys learned all of the words in the commercial game and, using the dictionary, made a new game. Much learning occurred here.

These are not all of the games, but represent a sampling. They must be used with discretion and with a purpose in mind. Commercial games are not necessary, for many teachers make up their own games to serve a particular need.

Mechanical devices have a fascination for many boys and there are a number of these on the market. The same warnings apply to these as to the games. The Accelerator is one of the best, but even this must be used with discretion. A nervous child might be harmed by this machine which is used to increase the speed of the child's reading. A blind covers the reading matter line by line. Its speed is adjustable. Machines may serve well as motivators.

Everything used is for the purpose of getting children to read books and we must not forget this.

CHAPTER VIII

Why Some Children Don't Read

"How Come?"

I allway's wonder whey my mother and father allway's haller at me. When I come home from school my mother is sometimes mad and She take's it out on me. When my brother get into my dad's thin's he haller at him about it.

And when my friend come the house and whoch T.V. me little brother and siseter in a mase up the frontroom my mother haller's at my friend and I. She dosen't let them come in for a week. When I'm sich She send me to school anyway. When my little brother or sisiter are sick she keep's them home in bed.

At school I sich the kids would quit seying I was dume and fat and ugly and stuped. They don't do that with someone who set's by me. He got to run around with all the other guise them make fun of me. If I could chang my personality. It isn't easy I have tryed if be for. But they all ways sey I try to acted big. Whate can I do.

This essay was written some years ago by a high school boy. There is no doubt that he feels very sorry for himself, but this life of his, to him, is miserable. How can he learn when his mind is so full of his personal trouble?

This boy is one of many who are similarly troubled. "Whate" can they do?

The reasons children fail to learn to read are numerous. Some not yet mentioned are home factors, not necessarily bad, but still they seem to have an effect.

Chinese Helen gives an example of what problems a foreign language in the home can cause.

Helen came to remedial reading class. I wondered why, at first. Helen knew all of the Dolch list of sight words. She knew the sounds represented by the letters and letter combinations. She could read fluently, orally, at grade level. I gave her a fifth grade Gates-Peardon Practice Exercises in Reading at her grade level. Now her difficulty was discovered.

The selection was about the birds' awakening in the forest and one phrase was "the pale-gray heavens were glowing in the distant east." I listened as Helen read the entire selection flawlessly. Then we began to go over every phrase for meaning. When we reached the quoted phrase, I asked what "heavens" meant. Helen said, "That's where you go when you die."

"How about 'glowing'?"

"That means 'shining'."

"What does 'east' mean?"

"It's a direction."

Helen knew some literal meanings of the words, but to put them together to make sense was beyond her. This was a case of verbalism and Helen's trouble was mainly due to her bilingualism. The remedy for this was a constant demand for meaning, while reading.

Maurice (accent on the last syllable) attended a school also attended by a number of children from the lower socio-economic brackets. The general dress was casual, but Maurice came to school immaculately clean, dressed in a suit, and always wore a little bow tie. He couldn't or wouldn't read. Perhaps he was rebelling in this way. One never knows.

I called the mother in, but even though she pointed out that Maurice must sometimes feel strange in his nice clothing, she was adamant that her boys would not go to school untidily.

Later, after working with Maurice awhile, I discovered that he was very interested in music. He wanted to play a clarinet. I called his mother and told her of the excellent program of music in the school and asked if she could get a clarinet for Maurice. I suggested that Maurice could rent an instrument from the school, but Maurice's mother would not sanction that.

In the remedial reading class, I provided books on Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin and many of the other musicians. These were easy biographies, and Maurice read them with great interest.

One day, I saw a clarinet advertised in the paper, so I called Maurice's mother, but she had already seen the advertisement. She said, however, that she was still searching. One day Maurice brought a nice clarinet to school.

I talked to the music teacher about this case so that he took particular notice of the boy. Later he reported that Maurice was the best of all his pupils. He became first clarinetist in the orchestra. In the meantime, Maurice continued reading, now with a greater variety of books. At the end of the year he was reading up to grade.

Finding the interests of the child is extremely important, and hand-picking the books in line with this interest is a secret of success. I am fortunate in having the head librarian as a friend, and this librarian selects the book to fit the child I try to describe.

James was in the sixth grade and hated to read. I tried all my wiles, without success, until one day I placed Robert Lawson's book Rabbit Hill open to the chapter "Reading Rots the Mind." I watched to see what would happen, but said nothing. James saw the open book, was intrigued with the title and sat down and finished the book. After that he continued to read. A sense of humor is so important for any teacher, but especially so for a remedial reading teacher.

Ivory White was a little negro boy. He was bright, full of mischief, and a very poor reader. I found that he was interested in magic and magic tricks. My desk was

soon cluttered with ropes, discs, glasses, papers of different kinds and many things which seem to have no connection with the teaching of reading.

I helped Ivory to read directions for magic tricks and helped him learn them. Sometimes he needed a partner. The classroom teachers and principal were patient and long-suffering and most cooperative and watched many performances of magic. From this, other books with a magic theme were read and in one of these, Ivory found a kindred soul. He looked at me with tears in his big eyes. "Oh, this is so sad," he said.

"Why do you think it is sad?"

"It reminds me of myself. No one likes me either."

Poor little waif. He was such a lonely child. I referred him to the school social worker. The remedial reading teacher cannot do everything. As it is, these needy children demand a great deal from the teacher.

Related to this, I learned about another teacher's experience. She was trying to teach phonics and the word "hill" was the basis upon which she built. The children in her class were largely from the Negro race and their speech was a little different.

"Children," said the teacher, "here is the word from our story. What is it?" The children responded that it was "hill."

"Who can think of a word that sounds like 'hill'?"

"Pill," offered one.

The teacher wrote it under 'hill' and pointed out the similarities between the two words.

Another child suggested the word "fill" which could be added.

All seemed to be going very well, the children were understanding phonics. This teacher went one step further. "Who can use the word 'hill' in a sentence?"

She selected one of the many children eagerly waving their hands. "Got a blister on m'hill," was the sentence. This was a shock. She tried the other words and got "We pill the pertaters," and "There was a whole fill of corn."

This is another problem teachers face. It is a good idea occasionally to find out what the children are really thinking.

Reading requires a certain amount of independence and some of the children with whom I have worked lacked this spirit. They were afraid to make mistakes. When talking to parents of some of these children I learned that they had never been allowed to go to town alone, or ride on a bus by themselves.

Everyone knows that intelligence varies among individuals, both as to amount and type. A child who scores on an intelligence test at the lower end of the range which we designate as "normal" cannot be expected to learn at the same rate as one who scores higher. This handicap has been present all his life and by the time he goes to school, he may be considerably farther behind in learning than his peers. Reading, too, will lag and the only thing a teacher can do in this case is to provide materials and experiences at his success level. This requires work on the part of the teacher and sometimes materials will have to be made for the child.

And so we see that unhappy children, too much of the wrong kind of help at home, bilingualism, being a member of another race, too much over-protection of the child by his parents, intelligence a little below the average, all tend to bring about reading problems.

CHAPTER IX

The Remedial Reading Teacher

What are the qualities to look for in a successful reading teacher?

First of all, they are the same as those found in any successful teacher.

He or she must be able to accept children in spite of their disabilities. It may be difficult to establish rapport and then gradually push the child away and help him to stand on his own feet. This step is essential for both the child and teacher. The child cannot always depend on someone else, and teachers need to be released to live their own lives.

A remedial reading teacher can probably function better if he has first had classroom experience. He knows the

problems with that of the regular class.

The remedial reading teacher must not only be able to get along with children, but also adults, parents, classroom teachers, the principal, other special teachers, school social workers, the school nurse and all the other adults interested in the child.

The remedial reading teacher must be a stable person with more than one interest. When one's job becomes one's whole life, he is to be pitied.

The remedial reading teacher must be flexible. Written lesson plans are all right if they can be disregarded. The children should be allowed to lead the way. They may come in the room with real concern about a difficult assignment given them in some other subject. This, then, requires the first attention.

The remedial reading teacher needs "the patience of Job." Each child is unique and exhibits his frustration in his own way. Such children are most difficult to reach in a small permissive group. Often they clash, but if the remedial reading teacher can view this objectively and work patiently, realizing that the behavior is a symptom of a child's unhappiness, that feeling will not be increased and may possibly be alleviated.

The remedial reading teacher needs to be well-trained in all phases of teaching. Common sense is an important factor.

The teacher needs to be optimistic, realistic and humble. He cannot teach all of the children to read and should not worry, after he has done the best possible both in teaching and referring.

The remedial reading teacher, then, must be a well-rounded, informed person who really likes other people and wants to help them, if possible.

CHAPTER X

The Joys of the Work

When one loves his work, he does not consider it work. I often think, if I did not need money to live, I would teach for the love of it.

Frequently, a child will leave the room saying a sincere unsolicited "Thank you." This is one of the many joys.

It was the last day of school and I went to the library on some errand. I was happily surprised to see a lady there whom I had not seem for some time. She was the stepmother of a very disturbed boy with whom I had worked. She seemed pleased to see me and told me jubilantly that the stepson was now in high school. He had three "A"s and one "B" on his report card.

When he came to my class he was a very disturbed boy. His mother and father had divorced and his father remarried. Every other weekend Larry had to visit his mother and how he used to dread those visits! He was a serious, sensitive, intelligent child. Fortunately his father married a fine woman who took much interest in the stepson.

Children usually do grow up, and often those over whom we have worried so needlessly turn out very well.

I have many treasures--a head crudely carved from ivory soap is one. I'll be dirty before I'll use it. On my desk are some things made by the boy who had to be forced into my room. One is a pencil holder fashioned of wood resembling a hippopotamus, the other a wooden holder in the form of a clown, but now holding two gay flowers which Richard made from crepe paper. When I told him I would use these in my college office, he could not believe it.

Victor liked flowers and knew that I did. He would ask me the color of the dress I would be wearing the next day, and would have a beautiful corsage most tastefully arranged the next day for me to wear.

I still wear a prized necklace given me by Janet, the first "case" cited.

So many lovely expressions of gratitude have been given that I just could not tell about all of them.

One of the most recent of these happy affairs was one that occurred a few months ago.

The group I had was a disrupted one. We could seldom do anything together. Somehow, one of these children, a boy, discovered my birthdate months before its occurrence.

The birthday arrived and the class came, as usual, but just as the children arrived, the telephone rang and the principal summoned me to his office. Should I send this group back to the classroom? They promised they would be good.

I went downstairs to the office that morning and the principal talked of many school topics, finally, abruptly saying, "I have work to do, and I'll see you again." I told him I had work to do, too, and hurried up the stairs.

The door was ajar as I reached the top step, but was closed quickly, What were those scamps up to?

I opened the door to find the room in darkness, except for a circle of candlelight on my desk. A lusty chorus of "Happy birthday to you" was followed by a rousing "Hip! Hip! Hooray!"

Then someone switched on the lights. There was a lovely birthday cake with a cake server, paper plates, napkins and cups. There were ice-cream cups, punch and cookies. There were plastic forks. The group had actually cooperated in the well-planned gesture of love. There were gifts, too--candy, perfume, a book and photograph and a pretty little jewelry box. What a happy time we had.

The children want me to tell you their names. They are Budd, Carol, Dennis, Karl, Karen and Vicky. What a happy occasion it was and how delighted I was to see that this group could work so well together for a common cause.

That morning, too, two boys brought a dagger-like paper opener. The blade was of aluminum and the parts of the handle were still clamped as they were not quite stuck together.

On my desk, now, as I write this, is a lovely bouquet of fragrant pinks a boy brought. He had raised them. Flowers are so often brought as tokens of esteem.

I have a wooden cross to be hung on a chain as a necklace and a pretty plastic bauble on a chain. I have worn them, of course.

Dennis was learning to play the cello and so was I. He gave me a little costume pin in the form of a cello. It is not the things, but what they represent that make them so valuable.

Children respond to respect and affection. "Everyone of us is a world by himself, mysterious and unique," says John Cowper Powys, and how fascinating we all are.

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